

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. LEBANON

A. THE SITUATION IMPROVES

ON THE MORNING OF THE 16TH, AS THE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT BEGAN TO TAKE HOLD, THE SITUATION IN BEIRUT WAS TENSE BUT MUCH IMPROVED.

--ON THE POLITICAL FRONT, BEHIND-THE-SCENES RECONCILIATION EFFORTS MAY HAVE PRODUCED AN UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN FRANGIE AND KARAME AND SOME TENTATIVE STEPS TOWARD ENLARGING THE CABINET. MOREOVER,

--LEFTIST LEADER JUMBLATT HAS MELLOWED SOMEWHAT AFTER HIS RECENT TRIP TO DAMASCUS AND, REPORTEDLY DUE TO SECRET

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SYRIAN PRESSURE, MAY NOW BE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN

THE CABINET, PROBABLY BY PROXY.

THE AMBASSADOR COMMENTS THAT IN A DECEMBER 16 MEETING, KARAME SAID THAT HIS IDEA OF MEDIATION BY ARAB FOREIGN MINISTERS HAD BEEN SHELVED AFTER ENCOUNTERING OBJECTIONS.

KARAME IS CURRENTLY TRYING TO SET UP AN ASAD/FRANGIE MEETING IN HOPES THAT FRANGIE WILL LISTEN TO ASAD'S CALLS FOR MODERATION AND UNDERSTANDING.

B. KARAME'S CHARGE OF ISRAELI INTERVENTION

THE EMBASSY ADVISES THAT THE REASON GIVEN FOR KARAME'S DECEMBER 16 DENUNCIATION OF ISRAELI INTERVENTION IN LEBANON'S DOMESTIC AFFAIRS WAS A RADIO ISRAEL ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE APPROVAL OF AN ISRAELI ARMY PLAN TO AID JEWS IN BEIRUT'S JEWISH QUARTER. THE AMBASSADOR STATES THAT IF SUCH A BROADCAST IS CONFIRMED AND IF IT ALLUDES TO THE MOLESTATION OF JEWS, SUCH REPORTING IS NOT SUBSTANTIATED BY FACT. BOTH SIDES IN RECENT FIGHTING HAVE GONE OUT OF THEIR WAY TO AVOID HARASSING THE JEWISH POPULATION IN BEIRUT. (RESPONDING TO A PRIVATE SUGGESTION FROM KARAME THAT THE USG MIGHT HAVE BEEN FOREWARNED OF THE ISRAELI PLAN, THE AMBASSADOR SAID THE USG HAD NO ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE.) (CONFIDENTIAL) BEIRUT 15238, 15242 AND BEIRUT 15243 (EXDIS), 12/16.)

2. SENGHOR BACKS US AID IN ANGOLAN STRUGGLE

MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR AGGREY ON DECEMBER 15, SENEGAL'S PRESIDENT SENGHOR PLEDGED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WILL NOT RECOGNIZE THE MPLA AND ENCOURAGED THE USG TO CONTINUE HELPING ANTI-MPLA FORCES IN ANGOLA. HE SAID THAT LEADERS OF GABON AND CAMEROON, AS WELL AS ZAIRE, HAD TOLD HIM THAT THEY VIEW SOVIET AND CUBAN INVOLVEMENT AS A DANGER GREATER THAN SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY ACTIONS.

IN RELATED COMMENTS SENGHOR:

--FORESAW THE POSSIBILITY OF AN ULTIMATE SOLUTION TO THE ANGOLAN PROBLEM THROUGH THE OAU, BUT ONLY IF THE
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SUPERPOWERS WITHDRAW THEIR FORCES;

--PREDICTED THAT THE OAU SUMMIT WILL TAKE PLACE ON JANUARY 10 OR 12 AND WILL ISSUE A RESOLUTION CONDEMNING ALL FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA;

--HOPED THAT SENEGAL AND THE US CAN WORK CLOSELY IN THE UN ON THE ANGOLAN ISSUE. (CONFIDENTIAL) DAKAR

7106 AND (UNCLASSIFIED) KHARTOUM 2905, 12/16.)

3. SOARES PROPOSES SOCIALIST/COMMUNIST MEETING

ON THE ROME LEG OF HIS EUROPEAN TOUR TO EXPLAIN THE "NEW COURSE OF THE PORTUGUESE REVOLUTION," PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST LEADER SOARES TOLD THE PRESS THAT HIS INITIATIVE FOR A MEETING OF ALL COMMUNIST AND SOCIALIST PARTIES OF "LATIN EUROPEAN" COUNTRIES HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY EVERYONE EXCEPT THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS.

EMBASSY COMMENT: NEITHER SOARES' ITALIAN SOCIALIST HOSTS NOR HIS COMMUNIST INTERLOCUTORS SHARE HIS OPTIMISM THAT SUCH A MEETING CAN BE CONVENED IN EARLY JANUARY. MOREOVER, WE DOUBT THE PCI HAS ABANDONED THE RESERVATIONS, WHICH IT SHARES WITH THE FRENCH COMMUNISTS, ABOUT THE MEETING. (CONFIDENTIAL) ROME 18381, 12/16.)

4. IDI AMIN: WINNING FRIENDS AND INFLUENCING PEOPLE?

THE WEST GERMAN AMBASSADOR TO UGANDA TOLD EMBASSY BONN RECENTLY THAT AMIN'S HANDLING OF THE ANGOLAN CRISIS AND HIS WORK AS OAU CHAIRMAN HAVE BROUGHT HIM GROWING RESPECT FROM MANY AFRICAN LEADERS, INCLUDING EVEN NYERERE. THE AMBASSADOR ALSO NOTED THAT AMIN:

--HAS BECOME MORE CRITICAL OF THE ARABS, LESS ASSURED OF THEIR STAND ON ISRAEL, AND CONVINCED THEY TAKE BLACK AFRICAN SUPPORT IN THE UN FOR GRANTED;

--IMMEDIATELY CLOSED RANKS WITH THE EGYPTIANS AND SUDANESE FOLLOWING THE BREAK WITH THE SOVIETS OVER ANGOLA, AND REFUSED QADHAFI'S INTERVENTION;

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--HAS ASKED FOR CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THE UK, FRANCE, AND CHINA, AND HAS REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT TIES WITH THE US WILL BE NORMALIZED. (SECRET) BONN 20366, 12/16.) INGERSOLL

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